

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, CY

SUBJECT: ARTICLE ON TERRORIST BASE IN CYPRUS

1. WE ARE TRANSMITTING FOR YOUR INFORMATION TEXT OF ARTICLE ENTITLED "TERROR HEADQUARTERS IN CYPRUS" PUBLISHED IN JULY 13 ISSUE OF ECONOMIST'S "CONFIDENTIAL FOREIGN REPORT." COPY OF ARTICLE WAS HANDED TO EUR ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST BY TURKISH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL DURING CALL ON OTHER BUSINESS JULY 28.

2. BEGIN TEXT: THREE WEEKS AGO, LUXURY VILLA IN LARNACA STANDING IN ITS OWN GROUNDS WAS THE SCENE OF A SECRET MEETING BETWEEN LIAISON OFFICERS FROM SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS. THEY INCLUDED WADI HADAD'S REVOLUTIONARY POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION
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OF PALESTINE (RPFLP), THE JAPANESE RED ARMY, VESTIGES OF THE BAADER-MEINHOF GANG, TERRORIST CELLS BASED IN LIBYA, ALGERIA AND SOUTH YEMEN, AND THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF TURKEY.

THIS WAS AN OPERATIONAL MEETING. WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES OFFER TWO THEORIES ABOUT WHAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO

ACHIEVE. THE FIRST IS THAT THE GROUPS REPRESENTED WANTED TO CONDUCT A JOINT POST-MORTEM ON THEIR RECENT OPERATIONS,

WHICH HAVE BEEN THWARTED BY CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN AMERICAN, WEST EUROPEAN AND ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE SERVICES. THE SECOND THEORY IS THAT THE CYPRUS MEETING WAS INTENDED TO DIVERT THE ATTENTION OF WESTERN INTELLIGENCE FROM ANOTHER, MORE IMPORTANT MEETING ATTENDED BY THE TOP TERRORIST LEADERS, AND DESIGNED TO ORCHESTRATE AN INTENSIFIED TERRORIST CAMPAIGN AIMED AT SOME ARAB STATES AS WELL AS ISRAEL AND WESTERN COUNTRIES.

ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE ASPECTS OF THE CYPRUS GET-TOGETHER WAS THAT THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GROUPS THAT ATTENDED HAD COOLLY INFORMED THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES ABOUT THE VISITORS AND REQUESTED THAT THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN SPECIAL TREATMENT AND THE FREEDOM TO MOVE AROUND THE ISLAND AT WILL. IT SEEMS THAT THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT WAS WILLING HOST.

CYPRUS APPEARS TO HAVE BECOME A PRIMARY BASE FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS IS LARGELY A RESULT OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON, WHICH HAS DENIED THEM SAFE BASES THERE. TWO YEARS AGO, PALESTINIAN GROUPS BEGAN TO TRANSFER SOME OF THEIR INTELLIGENCE UNITS TO LARNACA AND LIMASSOL LATER, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEY MOVED OPERATIONAL UNITS TO CYPRUS AS WELL. FINALLY, A YEAR OR SO AGO, THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENTS MOVED THEIR FINANCIAL OPERATIONS FROM LEBANON TO CYPRUS, AS WELL AS IMPORTANT FILES AND THEIR GUN-RUNNING NETWORK.

INEVITABLY, CYPRUS HAS BECOME A CENTRE FOR BLACK MARKET IN ARMS. FREIGHTERS LOADED WITH ARMS ARE NOW PUTTING IN AT GREEK CYPRIOT PORTS -- ALTHOUGH THOSE APPEAR TO BE USED AS TRANSIT-POINTS RATHER THAN FOR THE UNLOADING OF SMUGGLED ARMS. UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR, SUCH VESSELS WERE SENT DIRECTLY TO TYRE AND SIDON IN LEBANON. MOST OF THE SHIPS ARE REGISTERED IN RIJEKA IN YUGOSLAVIA, GENOESE AND GREEK AND LIBYAN PORTS. THEY OFTEN DISPLAY EAST EUROPEAN OR GREEK FLAGS, BUT A NUMBER BELONG TO DANISH AND SWEDISH SHIPPING LINES. THEY AVOID CARGO INSPECTION IN CYPRUS, RIDING AT ANCHOR OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR IN CLUSTERS OF UP TO TEN SHIPS AT A TIME, AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM SHORE ABOUT THEIR FINAL DESTINATIONS. GREEK CYPRIOT AGENTS PAID BY THE SOVIET, CUBAN AND LIBYAN EMBASSIES IN NICOSIA ARE SAID TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN CONTROLLING THIS SHIPPING.

THE SOVIET AND CUBAN EMBASSIES ARE THE LARGEST DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ON THE ISLAND. EACH HAS A STAFF OF OVER 150

PEOPLE, MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF WHOM ARE BELIEVED TO BE INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS OR MILITARY PERSONNEL. THE CUBAN EMBASSY WAS SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED AS EARLY AS 1967, AT THE TIME WHEN THE FIRST CUBAN ADVISERS WERE IDENTIFIED OPERATING WITH LEFT-WING PALESTINIAN FORCES IN LEBANON. LAST YEAR, THE NUMBER OF CUBANS IN LEBANON ROSE TO 50.

SOME WESTERN INTELLIGENCE SOURCES BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIANS ACTUALLY PLANNED TO INTERVENE IN THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR, USING CUBAN PROXY FORCES THAT COULD BE SENT IN VIA CYPRUS. ANY MOVE OF THIS KIND WAS BLOCKED BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RAPID ESCALATION OF THE WAR AND THE ENTRY OF THE SYRIANS. HOWEVER, A FEW CUBAN OFFICERS ARE STILL ATTACHED TO THE PALESTINIAN COMMAND CENTRES IN LEBANON.

SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL AT THE EMBASSY IN NICOSIA TAKE THEIR ORDERS FROM THE SOVIET COMMAND IN LIBYA. END TEXT.

3. WE HAVE NOTED THAT GOC SPOKESMAN ISSUED STATEMENT JULY 28 TO EFFECT THAT "COMPETENT SERVICES OF THE REPUBLIC/ HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT SECRET CONFERENCE MENTIONED IN ECONOMIST REPORT. CHRISTOPHER

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